

### **Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~for fixating a suture in a substantially perpendicular orientation relative to a pledget, the apparatus~~ comprising:

a pledget having at least a front and a rear surface and a first and a second opening extending through the pledget;

a suture passing through the first and second openings of the pledget; and

a block having a first and a second slit extending therethrough, the first and the second slits being configured to substantially align with ~~a- the first and a- second opening on a openings~~ in the pledget, the first slit configured and adapted to engage at least a portion of a first end portion of the suture and the second slit configured and adapted to engage at least a portion of a second end portion of the suture ~~to maintain, wherein the suture is maintained~~ in a substantially perpendicular orientation relative to the front surface of the pledget.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first and the second slit are configured and dimensioned to maintain a substantially parallel relationship between the first and the second end portions of the suture.

Claim 3 (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the block includes a first face, a second face, and a top face therebetween.

Claims 5-19 (Cancelled)